

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 3 and 8, and add claim 9.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of laser marking an article, comprising:
detecting a reference position of a focal point of a laser beam on a two-dimensional area;
storing the reference position; ~~and~~
calculating a difference between the reference position and a base position; and
directing the laser beam onto a marking surface of an article and moving the focal point relatively across the marking surface, a pattern being marked by the laser on the marking surface being based on ~~both the data set and~~ a data set, the reference position, and the difference between the reference position and the base position.
2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
moving the detector away from a plane ~~off~~ of the focal point; and
positioning the article with the marking surface thereof in the plane.
3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently amended) The method of ~~claim 3~~ claim 1, further comprising:
modifying the data set with the difference.
5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the data set includes at least a vector set of a desired substantially two-dimensional pattern, and the vector set is modified with the difference.
6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the data set includes calibration data for the laser, the difference being used to modify the calibration data.
7. (Currently amended) A method of marking an article, comprising:
storing a data set including at least a vector set of a desired substantially two-dimensional pattern;
generating a laser beam;
detecting a focal point of a laser beam with at least one detector that is at a predetermined reference position relative to a frame;
moving the detector relatively out of a plane of the focal point; and
placing an article so that the article is held by a holder that is in a predetermined position relative to the frame so that a marking surface of the article is in the plane;
and

directing the laser beam onto the marking surface and moving the focal point ~~freely~~ relatively across the marking surface, the position of the focal point on the marking surface being based on both the data set and the reference position.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (New) A method of laser marking an article, comprising:

detecting a reference position of a focal point of a laser beam on a two-dimensional area of a detector;

storing the reference position;

moving the detector away from a plane of the focal point;

positioning an article with a marking surface thereof in the plane; and

directing a laser beam onto the marking surface of the article and moving the focal point relatively across the marking surface, a pattern being marked by the laser on the marking surface being based on both a data set and the reference position.